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ABSTRACT

Changes in educational aspirations of South Carolina high school students between 1966-67 and 1972-73 were examined. Using group administered questionnaires, whenever possible, 5,396 students were interviewed in 42 randomly selected high schools which were stratified by color of students and size of the 10th grade in 1966-67. Due to lack of resources, the 2nd contact (made in 1972-73 and involving 3,122 students) was derived from 14 of the original schools and 2 private schools and as close as possible approximated the original sample. Student responses were analyzed in terms of historical change for black and white, male and female: (1) educational aspirations; (2) educational expectations; (3) certainty of educational expectations; and (4) intensity of educational aspirations. Significant findings indicated: a marked increase in aspirations to attend a vocational or technical school among both black and white males; a slight increase in positive goal deflection and a more pronounced decrease in negative goal deflection (expectation lower than aspiration) in all categories of students; a decrease in the proportion of students who ranked education of high importance (all categories of students); and an increase in the proportion of students who ranked education low among both color and sex groups. (JC)

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HISTORICAL CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF SOUTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, 1967-1973*

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Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to examine changes in educational aspirations of South Carolina high school students between 1966-67 and 1972-73.

Data

The data on which this report is based were collected as a part of a regional research project involving researchers in several southern states. 1/ The first contact was in 1966-67 and the second was in 1972-73.

Sample

The first group of students constitute a representative sample of all tenth grade high school students in South Carolina during the school year 1966-67. Tenth grade students were interviewed in forty-two randomly-selected high schools stratified by color of students and size of the tenth grade in 1965-66.

Group interviews were used with procedures varying according to physical facilities and administrators decision of the schools involved.

Where possible, all tenth graders were interviewed in one group. The alternative method was to interview all tenth grade English classes. No attempt was made to get interviews from students who were absent. 2/

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1/ Southern Regional Research Project S-81, "Development of Human Resource Potentials of Rural Youth in the South and Their Patterns of Mobility" and its predecessor project, S-61, "Human Resource Development and Mobility in the Rural South."

2/ Boyd, Virlyn A., "Aspirations, Expectations, and Attitudes of South Carolina High School Students," AE 335, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Clemson, S. C., September 1970.

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For the second contact in 1972-73, resources did not permit interviewing in all of the schools included in the first contact. Schools were selected from the original sample that, in the opinion of the project leader, would give the best representation of the original sample. For example, in three towns, both the Negro and white schools were included in the original sample. Since integration had been effected since the first study, the integrated schools in these towns were included in the 1973 study. In addition, one of these towns had two private academies in 1973 and permission was obtained to interview students in these schools also.

Selected characteristics of the 1966-67 and 1972-73 study samples are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Selected Characteristics of Sample Populations in South Carolina Youth Study, 1966-67 and 1972-73.

	1966-67	1972-73
Schools Included		
Public	42	14
Private	--	2
Counties Included	26	11
Useable Questionnaires		
Total	5396	3122
White		
Male	1799	897
Female	1786	891
Non-White		
Male	820	660
Female	991	674

Examination of the data in Table 2 reveals that rather marked changes occurred in educational aspirations of South Carolina males during the six years under study. The greatest changes were an increased proportion of both white and nonwhite male students aspiring to attend vocational or technical school after high school. The greatest decrease occurred in the proportion aspiring to do graduate study. Similar changes in educational aspirations of South Carolina females are shown by study of the data in Table 3.

Table 2. Historical Changes in Educational Aspirations of South Carolina Males: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Aspirations	Non-White			White		
	1967 N=620	1973 N-660	Change	1967 N=1799	1973 N=897	Change
Quit High School	0.4	2.0	+ 1.6	1.2	2.2	+ 1.0
Graduate From H. S.	12.9	29.8	+16.9	10.4	19.1	+ 8.7
Vocational & Technical School	27.4	21.1	- 6.3	20.1	20.3	+ 0.2
Graduate From Jr. College	7.6	7.4	- 0.2	6.0	3.8	- 2.2
Graduate From College	21.2	23.9	+ 2.7	33.8	30.4	- 3.4
Graduate Study	29.5	13.6	-15.9	28.1	23.9	- 4.2
No Answer	1.0	2.2	+ 1.2	0.4	0.3	- 0.1
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=14.6	d.f.=5.0		x^2=3.9	d.f.=5.0	

Table 3. Historical Changes in Educational Aspirations of South Carolina Females: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Aspirations	Non-White			White		
	1967 N=991	1973 N=674	Change	1967 N=1790	1973 N=891	Change
Quit High School	--	1.0	+ 1.0	0.9	1.9	+ 1.0
Graduate From H. S.	13.4	25.5	+12.1	10.8	20.1	+ 9.3
Vocational and Technical School	23.5	20.5	- 3.0	26.7	18.5	- 8.2
Graduate From Jr. College	6.4	8.8	+ 2.4	7.2	10.0	+ 2.8
Graduate From College	22.1	24.8	+ 2.7	32.2	30.2	- 2.0
Graduate Study	34.1	19.0	-15.1	22.0	19.3	- 2.7
No Answer	0.5	0.4	- 0.1	0.2	--	- 0.3
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=9.8	d.f.=5.0		x^2=5.3	d.f.=5.0	

Changes in expectations were generally the same as changes in aspirations except for a greater decrease in the proportion expecting to graduate from college (Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4. Historical Changes in Educational Expectations of South Carolina Males: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Expectations	Non-White			White		
	1967 N=820	1973 N=660	Change	1967 N=1799	1973 N=897	Change
Quit High School	0.2	1.2	+ 1.0	0.6	0.8	+ 0.2
Graduate From H. S.	25.5	34.8	+ 9.3	22.3	26.8	+ 4.5
Vocational and Technical School	26.6	21.4	- 5.2	20.5	21.9	+ 1.4
Graduate From Jr. College	7.3	8.3	+ 1.0	8.2	6.7	- 1.5
Graduate From College	24.8	24.2	- 0.6	36.3	30.5	- 5.8
Graduate Study	14.9	7.0	- 7.9	11.4	12.7	+ 1.3
No Answer	0.7	3.1	+ 2.4	0.7	0.6	- 0.1
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=5.6	d.f.=5.0		x^2=1.2	d.f.=5.0	

Table 5. Historical Changes in Educational Expectations of South Carolina Females: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Expectations	Non-White			White		
	1967 N=991	1973 N=674	Change	1967 N=1790	1973 N=891	Change
Quit High School	0.1	0.7	+ 0.6	0.4	1.0	+ 0.6
Graduate From H. S.	22.7	31.0	+ 8.3	22.7	29.7	+ 7.0
Vocational and Technical School	25.8	22.6	- 3.2	26.3	20.0	- 6.3
Graduate From Jr. College	7.7	9.2	+ 1.5	9.2	11.4	+ 2.2
Graduate From College	25.4	25.1	- 0.3	32.5	28.7	- 3.8
Graduate Study	16.7	10.8	- 5.9	8.4	8.9	+ 0.5
No Answer	1.6	0.6	- 1.0	0.5	0.3	- 0.2
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=3.3	d.f.=5.0		x^2=2.5	d.f.=5.0	

Data relating to anticipatory goal deflections with regard to educational projections are presented in Tables 6 and 7. No deflection indicates that educational aspirations and educational expectations were the same. The proportion of all categories (white and nonwhite males and females) with no goal deflection increased between the two study periods. Positive goal deflection is said to occur when expectations exceed aspirations. The proportion of students with positive goal deflection increased slightly while there was a more pronounced decrease in negative goal deflections (expectations lower than aspirations) in all categories of students.

Table 6. Historical Change in Anticipatory Goal Deflections of South Carolina Males: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Goal Deflection	Non-White 1967 N=808	Non-White 1973 N=636	Change	White 1967 N=1779	White 1973 N=891	Change
None	56.4	65.7	+ 9.3	61.9	68.4	+ 6.5
Positive	8.7	10.8	+ 2.1	2.7	4.8	+ 2.1
+1	(5.3)	(5.2)		(2.0)	(3.8)	
+2	(1.9)	(3.0)		(0.5)	(0.2)	
+3	(1.1)	(2.4)		(0.2)	(0.6)	
+4	(0.4)	(0.1)		(-)	(2.2)	
+5	(-)	(0.1)		(-)	(-)	
Negative	34.9	23.4	-11.5	35.4	26.8	- 8.6
-1	(18.7)	(12.4)		(22.1)	(16.9)	
-2	(6.6)	(5.0)		(6.2)	(5.3)	
-3	(6.7)	(4.2)		(5.7)	(3.7)	
-4	(2.8)	(1.7)		(1.4)	(0.8)	
-5	(0.1)	(-)		(-)	(0.1)	
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=3.2	d.f.=2.0		x^2=2.1	d.f.=2.0	

Table 7. Historical Change in Anticipatory Goal Deflections of South Carolina Females: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Goal Deflection	Non-White 1967 N=972	Non-White 1973 N=668	Change	White 1967 N=1780	White 1973 N=889	Change
None	56.3	63.9	+ 7.6	62.3	66.5	+ 4.2
Positive	7.7	10.6	+ 2.9	2.6	4.3	+ 1.7
+1	(4.1)	(6.0)		(1.7)	(2.8)	
+2	(1.5)	(2.5)		(0.5)	(1.0)	
+3	(1.3)	(1.3)		(0.2)	(0.3)	
+4	(0.7)	(0.7)		(0.1)	(0.1)	
+5	(-)	(-)		(-)	(-)	
Negative	36.0	25.4	-10.6	35.1	29.2	- 5.9
-1	(17.7)	(13.9)		(23.0)	(17.8)	
-2	(7.5)	(4.3)		(7.4)	(6.5)	
-3	(7.2)	(5.2)		(3.8)	(4.2)	
-4	(3.6)	(1.9)		(0.8)	(0.7)	
-5	(-)	(-)		(-)	(0.1)	
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=2.8	d.f.=2.0		x^2=1.1	d.f.=2.0	

The students were also asked to indicate the certainty of their educational expectations. The change in the proportion of students indicating the various degrees of certainty are shown in Tables 8 and 9. No significant pattern of change is evident although the proportion indicating that they were very certain that they would achieve their expectations increased for whites and non-whites of both sexes.

Table 8. Historical Changes in the Certainty of Educational Expectations of South Carolina Males: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Certainty	Non-White 1967 N=820	Non-White 1973 N=660	Change	White 1967 N=1799	White 1973 N=897	Change
(1) Very Certain	30.7	35.0	+ 4.3	26.2	35.2	+ 9.0
(2) Certain	38.7	35.0	- 3.7	44.1	45.2	+ 1.1
(3) Not Very Certain	24.1	18.0	- 6.1	23.7	14.7	- 9.0
(4) Uncertain	2.7	2.8	+ 0.1	4.0	2.7	- 1.3
(5) Very Uncertain	1.6	1.5	- 0.1	1.3	1.2	- 0.1
(6) No Answer	2.2	7.7	+ 5.5	0.7	1.0	+ 0.3
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=1.2	d.f.=4.0		x^2=3.7	d.f.=4.0	

Table 9. Historical Changes in the Certainty of Educational Expectations of South Carolina Females: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Certainty	Non-White			White		
	1967 N=991	1973 N=674	Change	1967 N=1786	1973 N=891	Change
(1) Very Certain	29.3	36.8	+ 7.5	30.5	34.3	+ 3.8
(2) Certain	41.5	39.0	- 2.5	45.7	42.0	- 3.7
(3) Not Very Certain	25.7	18.7	- 7.0	19.1	18.9	- 0.2
(4) Uncertain	1.8	2.6	+ 0.8	2.9	2.9	--
(5) Very Uncertain	0.9	0.9	--	1.1	1.5	+ 0.4
(6) No Answer	0.8	2.0	+ 1.2	0.7	0.4	- 0.3
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=2.2	d.f.=4.0		x^2=0.1	d.f.=4.0	

The students were asked to rank in order of importance to them the following list of items:

_____ To have lots of free time to do what I want.
_____ To get all the education I want.
_____ To earn as much money as I can.
_____ To get the job I want most.
_____ To live in the kind of place I like best.
_____ To have the kind of house, car, furniture, and other things like this I want.
_____ To get married and raise a family.

The proportion of students ranking education of high importance (either first or second) decreased in all categories (Tables 10 and 11). Conversely, the proportion giving education a low rating (sixth or seventh) increased in both color and sex groups.

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Table 10. Historical Changes in the Intensity of Educational Aspirations of South Carolina Males: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Rank Importance	Non-White 1967 N=820	Non-White 1973 N=660	Non-White Change	White 1967 N=1799	White 1973 N=897	White Change
High	80.0	59.6	-21.3	72.5	58.9	-13.6
1	(66.5)	(49.1)	(-17.4)	(60.8)	(49.1)	(-11.7)
2	(14.4)	(10.5)	(- 3.9)	(11.7)	(9.8)	(- 1.9)
Intermediate	8.5	18.8	+10.3	16.6	21.5	+ 4.9
3	(3.2)	(5.6)	(+ 2.4)	(7.3)	(8.5)	(+ 1.2)
4	(2.1)	(6.7)	(+ 4.6)	(5.0)	(6.1)	(+ 1.1)
5	(3.2)	(6.5)	(+ 3.3)	(4.3)	(6.9)	(+ 2.6)
Low	2.9	12.0	+ 9.2	9.5	17.5	+ 8.0
6	(1.7)	(7.3)	(+ 5.6)	(5.6)	(8.6)	(+ 3.0)
7	(1.2)	(4.7)	(+ 3.6)	(3.9)	(8.9)	(+ 5.0)
No Answer	7.7	9.6	+ 1.9	1.4	2.1	+ 0.7
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=12.7	d.f.=2.0		x^2=4.4	d.f.=2.0	

Table 11. Historical Changes in the Intensity of Educational Aspirations of South Carolina Females: 1967-1973 (in percent)

Rank Importance	Non-White 1967 N=991	Non-White 1973 N=674	Non-White Change	White 1967 N=1786	White 1973 N=891	White Change
High	87.3	81.3	- 6.0	81.8	72.8	- 9.0
1	(77.7)	(71.2)	(- 6.5)	(69.1)	(57.9)	(-11.2)
2	(9.5)	(10.1)	(+ 0.5)	(12.7)	(14.9)	(+ 2.2)
Intermediate	5.7	10.6	+ 4.9	12.0	16.2	+ 4.0
3	(2.4)	(4.2)	(+ 1.8)	(5.7)	(7.7)	(+ 2.0)
4	(1.6)	(2.5)	(+ 0.9)	(3.6)	(3.3)	(- 0.3)
5	(1.7)	(3.9)	(+ 2.2)	(2.7)	(5.2)	(+ 2.5)
Low	2.6	4.8	+ 2.2	6.0	10.2	+ 4.2
6	(1.7)	(2.4)	(+ 0.7)	(2.4)	(4.5)	(+ 2.1)
7	(0.9)	(2.4)	(+ 1.5)	(3.6)	(5.7)	(+ 2.1)
No Answer	4.4	3.3	- 1.1	0.2	0.8	+ 0.6
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	
	x^2=2.3	d.f.=2.0		x^2=2.2	d.f.=2.0	